



County of San Bernardino
Department of Public Health
ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL DIVISION (ACC)



Secondary Enforcement Mandatory Canine Spay/Neuter Ordinance

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Why is the County proposing a Secondary Enforcement Mandatory Canine Spay/Neuter Ordinance?

- A. This ordinance is being proposed to address the pet over population problem in San Bernardino County, which is primarily attributed to irresponsible pet owners. In Fiscal Year 2010-2011, 11,384 dogs were impounded at the San Bernardino County Animal Shelters located in Devore, Big Bear, and the Dogs Day Inn in Apple Valley. During this same time frame 4,185 or 37% percent of dogs impounded were euthanized, and in Calendar Year 2010, 602 individuals were bitten by dogs. We hope to educate owners, reduce the number of dogs running at large within the community and reduce the number of dogs impounded and euthanized.

Q. How does this proposed ordinance affect me as a dog owner?

- A. This ordinance will not affect you if you are in compliance with laws pertaining to keeping and owning a dog. You will be required to spay or neuter your dog if you are found guilty of committing another violation of State or local law pertaining to the obligations of a person keeping and owning a dog. Examples of such State or local law violations include, but are not limited to, the following: failure to possess a current canine rabies vaccination of the subject dog; failure to license a dog; leash law violation; to name a few.

Q. What if I do not have the money to have my dog sterilized?

- A. Fifty dollar vouchers are available to those who qualify to help offset the cost of the sterilization. These vouchers are available through POPCO, for those citizens residing in the unincorporated part of San Bernardino County. Call 1-888-767-2550 to see if you qualify and request a voucher. There are also low cost spay and neuter clinics in San Bernardino County, you can access their information at www.sbcounty.gov/acc or you can call Animal Care and Control at 1-800-472-5609 for further information.

Q. Are there exemptions in this ordinance?

- A. Yes the exemptions are: A competition dog that has competed in at least one dog show or sporting competition sanctioned by a national registry within the last 365 calendar days or has earned a conformation, obedience, agility, carting, herding, protection, rally, sporting, working or other title from a purebred dog registry; a purebred dog, recognized by and registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC), United Kennel Club (UKC), or other national registry; a dog used by a law enforcement agency for law enforcement purposes; a qualified service or assistance dog as defined in Food and Agriculture Section 30850; or a dog which is unable to be spayed or neutered as set forth in Section 32.1502(b); a dog used for breeding at a licensed breeding kennel as defined in Section 32.0301, a dog owner or custodian who possesses a valid Facility/Kennel license pursuant to Section 32.0111 or Section 32.0112.

Q. What are the benefits of spaying/neutering my dog?

- A. There are many benefits of having your dog spayed or neutered. Reduces pet overpopulation. Spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer. Neutering helps prevent testicular cancer, roaming in search of a mate, and helps to improve behavior.

Q. What other jurisdictions have similar or mandatory spay/neuter ordinances in effect?

- A. Secondary enforcement: Riverside County, Hesperia City, and Sonoma County.
Mandatory: San Bernardino City, Riverside City, Los Angeles County and 10 of the cities within its boundaries to mention a few examples within Southern California.